

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for use by an access point in a wireless communications environment wherein multiple channels are available for communication, comprising:

selecting a channel on which to provide service to at least one wireless device by:
_____ sending at least one message indicative of a claim to the selected channel
messages to other devices;

if no message indicative of a claim to the selected channel is received from
another device, commencing operation on the selected channel; and

_____ if a message indicative of a claim to the selected channel is received from another
device, thereby indicating conflict, resolving the conflict by at least one of:

_____ selecting a different channel on which to provide service, and
_____ reducing transmission power; and

receiving claim messages from other devices;
using the claim messages it sends and receives to select a channel on which to
communicate;

determining which wireless devices become associated with the access point by
periodically:

sending a message ~~Announce messages~~ to other wireless devices to indicate the
access point's presence and its protocol capability of the access point to the other devices;

receiving, ~~Bid~~ messages from other wireless devices, messages indicative of
requests to become associated with the access point wherein a device sends a Bid message to a
the access point to indicate that the device desires to communicate in the wireless
communications environment via the access point;

selecting a subset of the wireless devices from which a message was received
indicative of a request to become associated with the access point, thereby rejecting some of the
requests to become associated; and

sending an ~~Accept~~ a message to each selected wireless a device in response to a
Bid message to indicate that the access point will allow the selected device to communicate in
the wireless communications environment via the access point.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

receiving ~~a~~ registration request ~~message~~ ~~messages~~ from ~~a~~ wireless device ~~devices~~, wherein ~~a~~ the wireless device sends ~~a~~ the registration request message to the access point to indicate that the device desires to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the access point using a particular protocol; and

sending ~~a~~ registration acknowledge ~~message~~ ~~messages~~ to ~~the~~ wireless device ~~which sent the registration request message~~ ~~devices~~, wherein the access point sends the registration acknowledge message ~~a Registration acknowledge message to a device in response to a Registration Request message~~, to indicate that the access point understands that the device will communicate in the wireless communications environment using the particular protocol ~~Dynamic Radio Control Protocol~~.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~a~~ Bid message indicative of a request to become associated with the access point is sent by ~~a~~ wireless device to the access point if the wireless device ascertains that the access point is likely to provide better wireless communications performance than another access point through which the wireless device is currently communicating.